

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 04878 280941Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01
COME-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04
PA-01 CTME-00 AID-05 SS-15 STR-07 ITC-01 TRSE-00
SP-02 SOE-02 OMB-01 DOE-15 /108 W
-----010870 280944Z /15

O R 280857Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3525
USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4878

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MTN, ETRD, ASEAN, RP,US
SUBJ: POSTPONEMENT OF ASEAN SENIOR TRADE OFFICIALS MEETING IN
SINGAPORE

1. ASEAN SECTION OF DFA HAS PRESENTED EMBASSY WITH
NOTE 78821 OF MARCH 27, 1978, (TEXT REPORTED SEPTTEL)
STATING THAT THERE WILL BE NO ASEAN SENIOR TRADE
OFFIALS (STO) MEETING ON APRIL 3-4 EITHER IN SINGAPORE
OR GENEVA. THE STO MEETING HAS BEEN POSTPONED "TO
AFTER THE THIRD WEEK IN APRIL". DFA NOTE GOES ON
TO SAYT THAT "THIS INFORMATION IS GIVEN IN VIEW OF
AN ALLEGED INVITATION BY SINGAPORE..." TO ATTEND
APRIL 3-4 MEETING, INDICATING SOME CHARGIN ONPART
OF DFA'S ASEAN OFFICE THAT INVITATION WAS NOT CHanneled
THROUGH THE PHILIPPINE CONNECTION.

2. EMBASSY CONTACTED BOTH AMBASSADOR SUAREX AT DFA
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AND UNDERSECRETARY VALDEPENAS TO CONFIRM THAT DFA
NOTE REPRESENTS FINAL DECISION. VALDEPENAS SAID THAT
HE WOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING THE
PHILIPPINE POSITION AND THAT EASTER VACATION COMBINED
WITH ELECTION PRESSURE AND DELAYED RECEIPT OF U.S.
OFFER HAD MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DEVELOPE A DETAILED
ITEM-BY-ITEM RESPONSE BY NEXT WEEKEND. VALDEPENAS

ALSO STATED PRIVATELY THAT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ATTEND THE SINGAPORE MEETING BECAUSE "SENIOR OFFICIALS" WERE NOT RPT NOT PERMITTED TO TRAVEL ABROAD DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD (THE ELECTION IS APRIL 7).

3. COMMENT: INDICATIONS ARE THAT BOTH SUAREZ AT DFA AND VALDEPENAS AT TRADE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO MEET WITH U.S. TEAM IN SINGAPORE. EMBASSY CERTAINLY MADE EVERY EFFORT TO PERSUADE GOP REPS THAT AN EARLY MEETING WOULD BE TO ADVANTAGE OF PHILIPPINES. BOTH DFA AND DEPT. OF TRADE SOUCES HAVE TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT INDONESIA ALSO PROTESTED TIMING OF MEETING. NEWSOM

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Message Attributes

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